

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, January 1891, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. THE STRATFORD, Philadelphia. Sunday, Jan ? ? 1891. My dear Alec:

I have just telegraphed you about Elsie. I am indeed delighted and happy over her improvement. She is not perfectly well yet, but all the violent twitching and jerking seems entirely gone. I felt as if she were putting a constraint on herself, as if she were holding herself in, but Miss Kirwan said she was not. I was there an hour and a quarter, and in all that time there was not a false movement or a jerk, she walked straight and steadily, put both arms gently and firmly about my neck and unfastened my jacket and cape with both hands and talked so I could understand her with less trouble I think than I have ever done before. She showed me her story which was remarkable for dearth of incidents and abundance of millinery and artistic details, in which she showed a wealth of imagination and love of splendor perfectly overwhelming. I do not know how it would compare with the production of other children of her age, but it seemed to me her command of language was remarkable and uncommon. She is decidedly taller than I am, and large but well proportioned. I did not think her looking her best, but she was evidently happy, and very glad to see me. She was dressing to come to see if we had arrived as I entered. I had not told her I was coming, not desiring to keep her in a state of expectation, but I telegraphed Dr. Mitchell from New York asking him to send word here when I might see her, and I found a note from his secretary saying that I might see her at any time. Miss Kirwan says that the chorea has left head, arms and legs entirely, but is still very 2 marked about abdomen and diaphragm at times. That Dr. Mitchell wants to keep her here until Spring and then send her to Europe. I will make an appointment to see him tomorrow, and find out something more, and see what he will do about Miss True.

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Did you know that we were all in danger just before the train reached Troy? One of the wheels of our car got bent, and as it went around it thumped on the rails, producing such a strain on it that it was almost broken off by the time we reached Troy. The conductor discovered the fault when about half a dozen miles out, but we were then in the country away from help, so he decided to take the responsibility of saying nothing and letting us go on to Troy, but he told Mr. McCurdy his heart was in his mouth all the time, for if that wheel had broken we might have gone off the rails and had a pretty accident. Arrived in Troy it was discovered that we could not have gone much further, so a few moments after you and Miss True had left we all had to follow your example, dress hurriedly and transfer ourselves bag and baggage to another car. Very fortunately several people had left this other car in Troy so we had the drawing-room and three upper berths, scattered throughout the train, and reached New York very comfortably and without further accident. In New York I found a telegram saying Mamma would not come, so I rushed through the most necessary shopping, lunched with Mr. McCurdy's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Bracher, and came on here in the 6:13 train. Getting on board the ferry-boat my pocket was picked, I knew it at the time and looked around to see who did it, but thought nothing more being sure my purse was in my bag which I kept tightly in my hand. Alas! and Alas — I had just put my purse 3 in my pocket in the waiting room and the man must have seen me. I had quite forgotten having done so and was laughing in my sleeve at the man's disappointment in not finding anything in my pocket. There had been fifty dollars in that purse an hour before, but I happened to pay cash for my last purchases so the robber only got five dollars and my purse. Mr. McCurdy sent a description to the police office. He had just a moment before warned me of pickpockets and noticed the man. Mr. McCurdy is very much pleased with the model of his new invention and the method of casting type sent here by Mr. Ellis and the foreman of the firm were delighted and Mr. McCurdy is to see the head of the firm tomorrow and have the first type cast. He is very much encouraged and very much excited, although he does not like to admit it.

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I am going to drive with Elsie this afternoon and it is lunch time now. Daisy is with Elsie.
Goodbye, take care of yourself.

Yours ever,